

REMARKS

Claims 1-40 are pending in this application. By this Preliminary Amendment Applicants have revised claims 2, 9, 20, 21, 27-36 (renumbered as claims 26-35) and added claims 36-40. No new matter has been added. Claims 1, 17, 18, and 36 are independent.

Claims 2, 9, 20 and 21 have been amended to attend to minor matters of grammar and style.

Also, owing to an inadvertent clerical oversight, the application as originally filed omitted original claim 26 (claims 25 and 27 were presented, claim 26 was just left out). To correct this, claims 27-36 have been renumbered as claims 26-35, respectively. Where appropriate, the claim dependencies have been suitably revised.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

In compliance with the duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. § 1.56 and pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.97 and 1.98, the Examiner's attention is directed to the documents listed on the enclosed Information Disclosure Statement by Applicant form (PTO/SB/08A).

The cited references include a complete English translation of Japanese Laid-Open Patent Appln. No. 2003-53984, which was previously cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed with this application on February 25, 2004. Complete machine English translations of JP 2000-296626 and JP 2002-120382, also cited in that prior Information Disclosure Statement, are submitted as well.

To date, Applicants have not received a first Office Action, and so this Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is believed to be filed under 37 C.F.R. §1.97(b)(3).

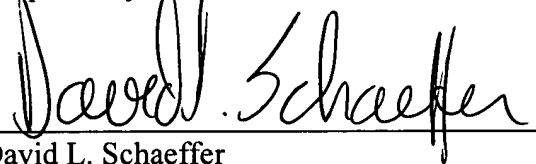
Application No. 10/786,200
Preliminary Amendment and Supplemental
Information Disclosure Statement filed October 1, 2004

It is respectfully requested that the cited information be considered by the Examiner and that a copy of the enclosed Form PTO/SB/08A be returned indicating that such information has been considered.

Other than the additional claim fees which are being paid by the accompanying Fee Transmittal for FY 2005 (PTO/SB/17) form, no fees are believed to be owed in connection with this Preliminary Amendment. Nevertheless, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees now or hereafter due to Deposit Account No. 19-4709.

Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of this application is respectfully requested. In the event that there are any questions, or should additional information be required, please contact applicant's attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David L. Schaeffer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

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